

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-6, 8-12, and 21 are pending in this application.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4, 6, 10, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,981,373 (Bando). In part, the Examiner argues that Bando teaches a first race component 5 made of a first material, and a second race component 13 made of a second material. In Bando, the component 5 is the race body while the component 13 is the shaft.

The Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite, among other things, a thrust bearing configured to support axial loading between two components, and that the second race component is engageable by the bearing cage to hold the first race component, the second race component and the bearing cage together as an assembly distinct from the two components between which axial loading is supported by the thrust bearing. This amendment clarifies that the first and second race components recited in claim 1 are distinct from the components between which the bearing supports axial loading, i.e., a shaft and a housing. Therefore, the Examiner's application of Bando, in which he argues that the shaft 13 is the second race component, is improper and amended claim 1 and dependent claims 2-6, 8-12, and 21 are allowable over Bando.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 10, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,529,400 (Polinsky, et al.). In part, the Examiner argues that Polinsky, et al. teaches a first race component 22 made of a first material, and a second race component 18 made of a second material. In Polinsky, et al., the component 22 is the radially extending annular portion of the first thrust race while the component 18 is a spacer of an annular plastic magnet holder.

The Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite, among other things, that the first race component is made of a first metal material, and the second race component is made of a second metal material. The spacer 18 of the annular plastic magnet holder 14 of Polinsky, et al. is a

plastic component and cannot be made from a metal material if it is to serve its intended purpose as a magnet holder. Specifically, the plastic magnet holder allows for a snap-fit of the magnet and allows for a snap-fit over the thrust bearing (see Col. 3, lines 17-28), and also provides the required non-metallic insulating capability for a magnet holder. The magnet holder 14 cannot be made of a metal material if it is to function as intended. For these reasons, amended claim 1 distinguishes Polinsky, et al., and claims 1-6, 8-12, and 21 are allowable over Polinsky, et al. Additionally, because the magnet holder must be a plastic material, Polinsky, et al. teaches away from the claimed second race component being a metal material, and thus does not render amended claim 1, or dependent claims 8, 9, 12, or 21, obvious.

For all of these reasons, independent claim 1, and dependent claims 2-6, 8-12, and 21 are allowable.

If the examiner believes an interview, either telephonic or in person, will advance the prosecution of this matter, it is respectfully requested that the examiner get in contact with the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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